

# Scripture

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## THE NEW ENGLISH VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT<sup>1</sup>

'A massive confidence trick, though without criminal intention' is what the *Sunday Express* called this new translation; 'it is as if a trade union leader had collaborated with Miss Enid Blyton.' Well of course the biblical translator is fair game. It is right that he should be. The public are warmly invited to criticise when a version is made expressly in their interest and advertised with a barrage of propaganda. Nevertheless, the 'I am no expert, but . . .' is never an impressive opening, and what follows it will often be found to be a matter of taste, personal taste; in this instance literary taste. One does not despair of quasi-absolute standards in the judgment of literary excellence, but it is at least disconcerting for the layman when one respected man of letters can write that the Gospel translations are 'admirable . . . what slept has been awakened' (John Masefield in *The Times*), and another can speak of a 'defect of tone throughout,' 'a language of administrators, even dropping to that of politicians' (V. S. Pritchett in the *New Statesman*). It is beyond our competence, and therefore fortunate that it is outside our scope, to weigh literary merits. But there is a question one would like to ask and which every translator must ask himself: Is the translation to be better than the original or as bad? It is a commonplace, for example, that Luke loves to plane

<sup>1</sup> *The New English Bible. New Testament.* Library edition, pp. xiii + 447. 21s. Popular edition, pp. xi + 432, 8s 6d (Oxford and Cambridge Presses, 1961). The way in which this new translation came to birth is now sufficiently well known, and will not be discussed here; it is explained in the Introduction, and Mgr Barton's article may be consulted in *The Clergy Review*, April 1961, pp. 217-23. There is an essay forthcoming from Fr Bligh, S.J., in the *Heythrop Journal*. We shall refer to the new translation as NEB, with RSV for the closely literal American version (New Testament 1946, Old Testament 1952), and JB for the Jerusalem Bible. It is necessary to say a word about this third. *La Sainte Bible traduite en français sous la direction de l'École Biblique de Jérusalem* (Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1955), commonly known in France as the *Bible de Jérusalem*, is at present being translated into English. The publishers, Darton, Longman & Todd, hope to have it out in 1962. Its battery of cross-reference, introductions, exegetical and textual notes, headings, make this edition the most useful I know. For the translation of the biblical text itself, the text established by the French scholars is being accepted, together with their interpretation, but the wording of the translation is governed throughout by continual reference to the original languages.

down the roughnesses of Mark's style. Is the translator to do Luke's work or leave Mark alone? And if Mark is left alone, of whom is the critic complaining? Of the translator, or of Mark? This is no attempt to evade capture by diving down some esoteric burrow, nor is it a scarecrow to frighten off popular criticism, but it is a plea for sympathy and caution. At least the critic who is Scripturally amateur might draw back from calling Professor Dodd 'the foreman of the demolition job,' though he may have some excuse for denouncing 'acadamese' and 'candy floss English' (D. Macdonald in *The Observer*). It is easy indeed, and amusing, to tilt at what is, wrongly, supposed to be a drawing-room refinement (though NEB is much less frightened of 'belly' than RSV is, and uses 'stomach' only where stomach is meant). It is evidently less easy to construct, unless we are to take the suggestion of Mr Robert Graves for a joke: 'vitiliginous' for 'leprous.' When all this is said, it still remains that there is criticism of this kind that has some justice in it. It may be true that *Revelations* is 'small beer, and sadly flat' (*Punch*), and that certain phrases 'stick out like black coat and pin-stripe trousers in an Oriental bazaar' (V. S. Pritchett). Of this the public and time will ultimately judge; they will judge well if information and sound taste go hand in hand.

Now what of the Greek text behind the translation? The edition (1516) of Erasmus whom, it will be remembered, St John Fisher made professor of Greek in Cambridge, was the raw material for the King James Version. Erasmus was at the mercy of eleventh-century minuscule manuscripts as his earliest source, but his edition, substantially, remained the 'Received Text' until the last century. There have been two notable changes in the art of textual criticism since then, as notable as the progress from steam to oil and from oil to atom. The first stage was one of discovery, edition, rumination: fourth-century codices and even second-century versions came to light, and many others; the scholars fell upon these, scrutinised them, sorted them into 'families,' became decided in their preference (in a somewhat wholesale manner and rather hastily, as it would now appear), and from this gestation was born in England the sound but unpopular Revised Version of 1881. The second stage began with disillusion: the 'families' were not behaving themselves, that is to say they were not as clearly and as uniformly grouped as they had appeared; the great fourth-century codices themselves, Westcott and Hort's great 'Neutral Text' which had dominated the Revised Version, were found to be not spring water but piped editions and not disinterested witnesses.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the importance of the earliest translations began

<sup>1</sup> Of course, what is a molehill for the public is a mountain to the textual critic. Nevertheless, reviewers should respect a science that is akin to microphysics.

to force itself upon the critics' notice, and the quotations in the earliest ecclesiastical writers; there were papyri, too, of great antiquity. The neat old card-index system had tumbled over the floor, reshuffled itself, and been smothered under a mass of new facts. All the work was to do again. It is still to be done. But now (for we are still in this second stage) a method is forcing itself to the front which always played at least some humble part in textual criticism, the method that weighs not the manuscript authorities but the intrinsic likelihood of a given reading. It is no longer accepted that a respectable 'family' can do no wrong, there is no general absolution, every word is guilty until it is proved innocent. This is all to the good, but with a principle in play that is partly subjective we must expect variety, apparent inconsistency, something which in the 'first stage' we have described would have been called—and oddly still is—'eclecticism.' The question we have asked at the beginning of this paragraph ('What of the Greek text behind the translation?') is something of an anachronism therefore. The text is selected as the translator proceeds—not, of course, scorning the external authorities but using the principle we have described with more freedom than his fathers would have done. One may disagree with the choice, but it is important to know what motives there are behind it. We may remark here, in passing, that complaints about certain preferences for the 'Western Text' (as it is misleadingly called) are perhaps unjust if we remember, first, the criterion of internal criticism and, second, the gaining favour of a hitherto despised text. This is not to say that one always agrees. It is a surprise to read, for example, that our Lord is 'warmly indignant' when he stretches out his hand to heal the leper (Mk. 1:41), and not 'moved with pity'; one can only suppose that the Western reading has been preferred (since there is no question of harmonisation here; the other gospels omit) precisely because it is the more 'difficult' reading. Even then, it seems misleading to refer, in the footnote, to the mass of counter-evidence as 'some witnesses.'

The footnotes, all textual and none exegetical, are perhaps not as full or as many as might have been expected. The impression is left that this, coupled with the complete absence of cross-reference even for quotations from the Old Testament or for gospel parallels, has been done to leave an undeniably beautiful page unsullied. A pity, some may think. And since the textual footnotes are so sparse, the citation of the Sinaitic Syriac, apropos Mt. 1:16 (Joseph, to whom Mary, a virgin, was betrothed, was the father of . . .), which is critically speaking negligible, appears all the more scrupulous; perhaps due to the pressure of members of the committee. The common reader might also be misled by the footnote to Lk. 1:46 ('And Mary said'—

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the Magnificat follows): 'So the majority of ancient witnesses; some read Elizabeth; the original may have had no name.' If the original had no name, the Magnificat is Elizabeth's ('and she said' would refer to Elizabeth the last speaker). But surely the textual footnote in JB is more just: 'Not "Elizabeth," a variant reading without serious support.'

We may now turn to certain particularities of the new translation. It should be said at the outset that there can be no question of the scholarship and care that lies behind it; the history of its making and the men who made it are guarantees of both. What has been done is the outcome of a thought-out policy and, as it seems to me, it is only that policy that can be usefully examined. Other questions like the acceptance of the shorter reading of Luke's Eucharistic text (Lk. 22: 19b-20 are, one thinks mistakenly, omitted), the use of 'girl' for Mary (eliminating the Isaian echo), the committing of Jn. 8:1-11 to the end of the gospel (a reasonable procedure), the printing of both 'finals' of Mark and a hundred similar questions might be raised, but these are not properly characteristics of NEB and do not contrast it with the other version which has swept the English-speaking world, the American Revised Standard Version. Where these two stand contrasted, and widely contrasted, is in their literary policy (though indeed, as we shall see, this may overflow into exegesis). 'The Revised Standard Version is not a new translation in the language of today. . . . It is a revision which seeks to preserve all that is best in the English Bible as it has been known and used through the years' (Preface). Compare this from the Introduction to NEB: 'The Joint Committee which promoted and controlled the enterprise decided at the outset that what was now needed was not another revision of the Authorised Version but a genuinely new translation, in which an attempt should be made consistently to use the idiom of contemporary English to convey the meaning of the Greek.'

How do these two policies work out in practice? Here is a sentence taken at random from Galatians (5:6) as it is in the traditional and closely literal RSV, in the 'idiom of contemporary English' represented by NEB, in the forthcoming English edition of the *Bible de Jérusalem*:

RSV	NEB	JB
For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love.	If we are in union with Christ Jesus circumcision  makes no difference at all,  nor does the want of it; the only thing that counts is faith active in love.	For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor the lack of it has any value, but only faith active in love.

In the Greek this sentence has 15 words, RSV 17, NEB 30, JB 20. NEB and JB add something to their total by a common dislike for the word 'uncircumcision' (which, however, NEB uses only a few verses lower down, 6:15, and rather surprisingly in the almost exactly parallel sentence of 1 Cor. 7:19: 'Circumcision or uncircumcision is neither here nor there'). The NEB adds further to its score by filling out Paul's strongly adversative 'but' (*ἀλλά*) into a clause ('the only thing that counts'); the JB feels that 'but' is too weak for *ἀλλά*, though it refuses to go to the lengths of NEB. The reader must judge for himself whether NEB has made the incisive Paul too wordy. But perhaps the most significant difference here is NEB's refusal, which has few exceptions, to use Paul's recurrent phrase 'in Christ' ('in union with,' 'in fellowship with,' 'united with,' etc.). For here we are at the crossroads of translation, I mean of course biblical translation which has (as I think) its own peculiar claim to vocabular consistency, as also to what may be called 'neutrality' on the part of the translator—I mean a resistance to paraphrase. Of course, this resistance can never be absolute in a readable translation: it is a question of degree; but degree is important. In the example we are considering, students who have no Greek may feel themselves cheated when, for instance, 'those who have died in Christ' becomes 'those who have died within Christ's fellowship' (1 Cor. 15:18). He may feel that the theology is shallower than it should be. And yet in assessments of this kind, it is only fair to remember that a translation is made with a determined public in view. Now the NEB is not designed as a tool for biblical theology, and indeed it is reasonable to suppose that a theologian would know his Greek and need no NEB; it is a faithful, somewhat free, easy-to-read translation, addressed (as I have seen suggested) to unbelievers and even potential unbelievers, conciliatory—perhaps even condescending, as when 'Caesar' becomes 'Roman Emperor'—and supremely competent. In these circumstances it is understandable that 'If you wish to be perfect' is 'If you wish to go the whole way' (Mt. 19:21), and the children's 'angels' in Mt. 18:10 become 'guardian angels.'

And because this modern 'public' of ours is supposed (perhaps rather hastily) to have lost its taste for sonority and flowing rhythm, there is less fear of the staccato and less tolerance of the protracted sentence. Here there is almost certainly a gain in clarity, particularly in the Pauline epistles. But, as with every gain, there goes a loss—and here occasionally a loss without the gain. Thus at times the NEB is impatient of repetition (though in Mt. 16:18 it intrudes an interpretative repetition: 'You are Peter, *the Rock*, and on this rock . . .')—unfortunate that by a necessity of printing a distinction should appear

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to be made). Now repetition need not be deplorable, it is a trick the human baby never entirely loses, and it is often effective, certainly revealing an author's temperament. The following example has already been singled out in the reviews, and one cannot help but join in their complaint. For 1 Cor. 13:11, the Rheims-Challoner reads :

When I was a child, I spoke as a child,  
I understood as a child, I thought as a child.  
But when I became a man,  
I put away the things of a child.

But NEB has :

When I was a child, my speech,  
my outlook, and my thoughts were all childish.  
When I grew up,  
I had finished with childish things.

Paul's hammered indictment of superficial *charismata* has been smoothed out into persuasive pedagogy. With greater reason the ten times repeated 'flesh' in Rom. 8:3-9 ('lower nature' four times in NEB) is varied, though even here there seems to be a loss of impact. It is the old question : how far may the biblical translator venture to improve upon his original? If he does truly improve, he will be sure of a round of applause, but is this—as the jargon goes—ethical?

Associated with this business of repetition is what we have gracelessly called 'vocal consistency'; this self-denying ordinance the RSV has most gallantly assumed, and its great Concordance is a monument to a virtue that NEB lays no claim to, indeed explicitly repudiates. The virtue may be thought puritanical, as in some part it is, and even RSV cannot always practise it; nevertheless, in the biblical literary tradition where one writer not infrequently makes deliberate echo of some predecessor a measure of consistency is necessary, at least for the student. It is still to be seen what the NEB Old Testament (some years away) will do about this : how far, for example, the Deuteronomic style will be recognisable in sections of the historical books; how far, in short, the literary critic will be able to work from the English. In this field, it may be thought, respect for the original may have to defy popular approval. Let me take a sentence related to this : God gave Solomon 'a heart great as the sand on the seashore' (1 Kg. 4:29; JB). Quite understandably Mgr Knox sees how wrenched the comparison is here and prefers 'a store of knowledge wide as the sand on the sea-shore,' which makes the comparison altogether natural and the translation readable. Yet

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the very unnaturalness of the picture (elsewhere in the Bible it is used only to express things innumerable, and not size) makes many scholars conclude to the late date of this verse. One may be excused for preserving the artificiality therefore, though here again it may be that the translator must keep his intended public in mind.

Now in the New Testament, and particularly for the Gospels where the question of literary relationships is hotly debated, consistency—where it is reasonably possible—is still of importance. In an excellent review<sup>1</sup> the author even suggests that in NEB variety seems to have been made a virtue in itself. He instances the word γραμματεὺς, which occurs sixty-one times in the New Testament and is consistently translated 'scribes' in RSV. In the NEB he counts 'lawyers' (30 times), 'doctors of the law' (25), 'teachers' (4), 'teachers of the law' (2). He quite rightly adds that the occasional use of νομικός by Luke alone<sup>2</sup> is thus obscured, although many think that this has a bearing on the problem of Luke's sources. In this example, one feels, the question of the intended readers is not relevant. In this same review (if we may be forgiven for going back to a point we have already mentioned) freedom of a different kind is made the subject of warning, not however of rebuke. The passage quoted is from Rev. (Apoc.) 13:18 in RSV and NEB, to which one may be allowed to add the Jerusalem Bible version:

RSV	NEB	JB
This calls for wisdom : let him who has under- standing reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number,  its number  is six hundred and sixty-six.	Here is the key ; and anyone who has intelligence may work out the number of the beast, The number represents a man's name, and the numerical value of its letters is six hundred and sixty-six.	This calls for quick wit : let one who is shrewd  reckon out the number of the Beast, which is the number of a man : his number  is six hundred and sixty-six.

One rather sympathises with the NEB paraphrase here ; the temptation to do so, and what is almost the justification for doing so, is the complete absence of explanatory notes. It might be permitted to urge that the NEB translators or committee publish a commentary ; it is improbable that this will be done, but the present writer is convinced that no Bible should be published without adequate notes ; a book of such moment and of such difficulty demands them. The dangers of sectarianism are rapidly disappearing and the bad old times of

<sup>1</sup> *The Times Literary Supplement*, 24 March 1961

<sup>2</sup> Though perhaps here we should except the (doubtful) reading of Mt. 22:35

footnote polemic have surely gone. A translator sitting on a cushion of footnote will be more at his ease (though this, too, has its perils) and not lured to paraphrase.

The flavour of the new version can best be communicated here by a few samples. 'Behold' has gone; 'in the bosom of the Father' has become 'nearest the Father's heart' (inadequately?); 'physician' in Mt. 9:12 (though not in Lk. 4:23) is 'doctor'; 'moat and beam' are now 'speck and plank'; 'soft garments' reads 'silks and satins'; 'man born of woman' is (jauntily?) 'a mother's son'; 'publicans' are 'tax-gatherers' (why not 'tax-collectors'?); 'swine' are 'pigs', and 'sinners' 'bad characters'; 'let us draw lots for it' is 'let us toss for it'; the sponge is stretched out to the Crucified not on 'hyssop' (Jn.) but on 'a javelin' (a reading most attractive but almost unsupported in the manuscripts); 'gates of hell prevail' is 'forces of death overpower'; 'great was its fall' (Mt. 7:27; JB) reads, with more gusto than sombreness, 'down it fell with a great crash'; 'gnashing of teeth' is, more accurately, 'grinding of teeth'; that ancient fight about nothing, the 'woman, a sister' of 1 Cor. 9:5 (Rheims) is still stubbornly, and questionably, 'a Christian wife'; the 'sting in the flesh' is 'a sharp pain in my body,' perhaps too specifically; the technical 'sign' in St John is happily preserved, as it was not in the Knox version (though why not 'sign' also in Rev. 12:1 where 'portent' is read?); 'Barabbas' is 'Jesus Bar-Abbas', which makes good contrast with 'Jesus who is called the Christ' ('Jesus called Messiah' in this version) but which, according to JB footnote, seems to have an apocryphal tradition for its source; the 'beginning of sorrows' ('of the birth-pangs' in JB) is 'the birth-pangs of the new age'; there are ten 'girls' who are wise and foolish, but 'the girl's name was Mary' will grate on a Catholic ear ('virgin's,' RSV); 'except it be for fornication' is 'for any cause other than unchastity' in both Mt. 5:32 and 19:9, though the Greek is notably different; 'Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together' (Mt. 24:28; Rheims) is most happily 'Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather'; 'Woman, what is it to me and to thee?' is translated 'Your concern, mother, is not mine.'

But of all the changes, the disappearance of 'thou' with its troublesome verb-forms is, naturally, the most pervasive. The Old Testament will benefit much more by it. One says 'benefit,' though here there is a loss too; our language has lost and we have to surrender to the new standard of literary living. There are certain archaisms that demand retention. When Achab defies Ben-Hadad with the proverb, 'Who dons his armour may not so boast as he that doffs it'

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(1 Kg. 20:11; JB), we would be rash indeed to translate, 'Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.' And indeed the whole great framework of Christianity may be called 'archaic'; the New Testament itself spoke in terms of the Old. But there are purely literary archaisms within a given language that may induce a dream-state or, worse, an affectation. In all but a few parts of our country 'thou' is unreal. It is no surprise that NEB agrees with RSV in letting it go. And yet, again with RSV, it remains when God is addressed. There is liturgical preoccupation here, no doubt. Where there is intention (though fulfilment is doubtless some distance away) of using a translation uniformly in public worship, the version will perforce retain something of the hieratic. With other translations which make no claim to influence, much less plead for, liturgical usage, the case is different. The time will come, and now is for some, when the common man will prefer to address God, with equal reverence and perhaps with more naturalness, as 'you.' With this in mind one may compare NEB with JB in the rendering of the 'Our Father':

## NEB

Our Father in heaven,  
Thy name be hallowed;  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us the wrong we have done,  
As we have forgiven those who have wronged us.  
And do not bring us to the test,  
But save us from the evil one.

## JB

Our Father in heaven,  
may your Name be held holy,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts,  
as we have forgiven our debtors.  
And do not lead us into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.

The NEB has made a stir as (we hope not ominously) the Revised Version made a stir at the end of the last century and died at the hands of the people. If the Catholic wonders at the excitement, it is because he forgets that his own liturgical text has been Latin, and he has not felt the wind of change; because he forgets also that his own 1598 Rheims New Testament went through extensive revision in the eighteenth century (its 'Our Father which art' has given way to 'who art' many years now); moreover, he is almost impervious to shock: his sense of tradition is indeed strong, but it is of a living and lively tradition, and development of one sort and another he takes for granted. He might therefore underestimate the effect of this new translation on those English-speaking peoples over whose life and liturgy one revered version of God's word has ruled for three hundred and fifty years. The surgery is painful and severe; one can only hope that it will be successful. If it is not received into the churches of our age, we may at least pray that it will be welcomed in its streets.

RECENT DISCUSSION OF THE TITLE 'LAMB OF GOD'

And the presentation? Making the usual allowances for the mawkish religiousness of Dickens, we may quote with some sympathy his description of a nineteenth-century English Sunday. Arthur Clennam ruminates:

There was the interminable Sunday of his nonage; when his mother, stern of face and unrelenting of heart, would sit all day behind a Bible—bound, like her own construction of it, in the hardest, barest, and straitest boards, with one dented ornament on the cover like the drag of a chain, and a wrathful sprinkling of red upon the edges of the leaves—as if it, of all books! were a fortification against sweetness of temper, natural affection, and gentle intercourse.

What a difference here!

ALEX. JONES

Upholland

RECENT DISCUSSION OF THE TITLE  
'LAMB OF GOD'

In this paper I wish to present a synthesis of the latest discussion<sup>1</sup> concerning the origin and meaning of the expression *ho amnos tou Theou*: the lamb of God, in the Fourth Gospel. This expression is found twice in St John, once in a simple form: 'Behold the lamb of God' (1:36), and once with the addition 'who takes away the sin of the world' (1:29).

With few exceptions the exegetes who have considered this question during the last few years (1950-60) distinguish two stages in the interpretation of this passage of the Gospel: they distinguish the time when the words 'Behold the lamb of God' were written, namely at the end of the first century A.D., from the time when these words were actually spoken, or were supposed to have been spoken by John the

<sup>1</sup> The most important contributions have been made by the following: C. D. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, Cambridge 1953, pp. 230-8; J. Jeremias, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* v (1954), p. 700; V. Taylor, *Jesus and his Sacrifice*, London 1955, pp. 224-5; C. K. Barrett, 'The Lamb of God' in *New Testament Studies* 1 (1955), pp. 210-18; O. Cullmann, *Les sacrements dans l'évangile johannique* Paris 1955, pp. 70-2; A. George, 'De l'agneau pascal à l'agneau de Dieu' in *Bible et Vie chrétienne* ix (1955), pp. 85-90; M.-E. Boismard, *Du baptême à Cana*, Paris 1956, pp. 42-3; id., 'Le Christ-Agneau-Rédempteur des hommes' in *Lumière et Vie* xxxvi (1958), pp. 97-104; B. Prete, 'Gesù Agnello di Dio, Valore ed origine dell'immagine' in *Sacra Dottrina* 1 (1956), pp. 13-31; I. de la Potterie, 'Ecco l'Agnello di Dio' in *Bibbia e Oriente* 1 (1959), pp. 161-9; R. E. Brown, 'Three Quotations from John the Baptist in the Gospel of John' in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* xxii (1960), p. 292-8.

Baptist, namely at the beginning of Jesus' public life. In other words they consider the meaning of the title, on the one hand according to its *Sitz im Evangelium* or its *tempus scriptiois*, and on the other, according to its *Sitz im Leben Christi* or its *tempus dictionis*.

# 1 Its significance in the mind of the fourth evangelist

With regard to the meaning of the title 'Lamb of God' in the mind and intention of the fourth evangelist, there are two major explanations among recent exegetes. The first one is presented with great emphasis by Dodd. He thinks that the expression 'Lamb of God' in the first intention of the evangelist is a messianic title identified with 'king of Israel.' The lamb represents the eschatological young ram which is shepherd and leader of the sheep, and which makes an end of sin by overcoming the powers of evil, quite apart from any thought of a redemptive death. The arguments supporting this explanation are taken from the Apocalypse and the Jewish apocryphal and eschatological writings. In the Apocalypse, which comes from the same environment as the Fourth Gospel, we find the figure of the *arnion*: the horned lamb, leader or shepherd of the people of God: 'For the lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and will guide them to the fountains of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes' (Apoc. 7:17). The *arnion* stands on Mount Zion surrounded by myriads of saints (14:1-5), and the kings and great ones of the earth hide themselves from his wrath (6:16). It is true that the Apocalypse uses the word *arnion* and not *amnos* as in the Gospel, but in the Jewish apocalypses many synonymous terms are employed for the bell-wether of the flock. In the Apocalypse the lamb is also presented as sacrificed for the redemption of man (5:6, 12; 7:14), but this is not, according to Dodd, the primary sense of the figure. It was only later that the militant and conquering Messiah was fused with the lamb of sacrifice.

Moreover the context of the first chapter of the Gospel of John suggests that the evangelist understood 'the lamb of God' as a synonym for the eschatological Messiah. On hearing the Baptist say, 'Behold the lamb of God,' Andrew exclaimed to his brother Peter, 'We have found the Messiah.' This last word is to be considered as the explanation of the Baptist's exclamation.

The addition 'who takes away the sin of the world' is to be understood of the removing of sin. In 1 Jn. 3:5 the taking away of sin is paralleled with the destroying of sin. In the Jewish writings, such as the *Testament of Levi* (18:9), the *Psalms of Solomon* (17:29) and the *Apocalypse of Baruch* (73:1-4) we find the picture of the conquering lamb who destroys evil in the world.

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Dodd admits the possibility that in speaking of the lamb and of the removing of sin, the evangelist could be thinking of the servant as a sin-offering, and of the lamb of sacrifice, because John the apostle certainly used *testimonia* from the prophecy of the Suffering Servant in Is. 52:13-53, 12. But if the evangelist did so, it was in a 'highly sublimated sense.' The true meaning of 'Lamb of God' is just a traditional messianic title without any reference to the expiatory death of Christ.

Dodd's explanation has not been accepted by many modern scholars. Barrett criticises it strongly. He points out that Dodd's interpretation does not do justice to the explanatory clause 'Who takes away the sin of the world,' which according to the Hebrew background often signifies the removal not of evil simply, but of guilt (cf. 2 Sam. 15:25; 25:28). Barrett also thinks that the paschal allusions of the Fourth Gospel are undervalued by Dodd.

The second and more common interpretation today of the expression 'Lamb of God' in the mind of the fourth evangelist, is that this phrase is connected with and signifies the redemptive activity of Christ. In the second half of the first century A.D. the title 'Lamb of God' was attributed to Jesus in relation to his salvific death. Christ is called *amnos* in Ac. 8:32, where there is a quotation from Is. 53:7, namely from the fourth song of the Suffering Servant. Jesus is also compared with the *amnos* of Is. 53 in 1 Pet. 1:19, in a context which stresses the value of his redemptive act: 'You know that you were redeemed not with perishable things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.' A characteristic feature of the *arnion* of the Apocalypse is to be a lamb slain in sacrifice (5:6, 12; 7:14, etc.), who redeems mankind (5:9). This New Testament background suggests that John summarises in the title 'Lamb of God' the Christian tradition concerning the salvific death of the Messiah. This idea is clearly found in 1 Jn. 2:3; 3:5: 'Jesus is a propitiation for our sins, not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. . . . You know that he appeared to take our sins away, and sin is not in him.'

The origin of this title is to be found, according to the majority of the recent exegetes, in two Old Testament figures, namely that of the paschal lamb and that of the Suffering Servant. Jesus is the paschal lamb of the Christian Passover who by his death delivered the world from sin, as the original paschal lamb's blood had delivered the Israelites from the destroying angel. John shows special interest in the Passover, for in his Gospel he mentions three times the feast of Passover, and he alludes to it as a type of the death of Christ: 'For these

things came to pass that the Scripture might be fulfilled: Not a bone of him shall you break' (19:36). This passage is a quotation from Ex. 12:46 and Num. 9:12, dealing with the regulations concerning the paschal lamb. Dodd assigns the Old Testament reference of this passage to Ps. 34:21 which speaks of the afflictions of the righteous and their deliverance; but this is very improbable.

John represents Jesus as dying at the time when the paschal lambs were being sacrificed in the temple precincts. If the synoptic chronology which differs from John is correct, or if we accept the new chronology proposed by Mlle Jaubert,<sup>1</sup> the johannine chronology has an exclusively theological interest: Jesus himself was the true paschal lamb offered at the appointed hour on the afternoon of Nisan 14. If the chronology of John is right his dating significantly agrees with Paul's description of Christ as 'our passover' (1 Cor. 5:7). In John's description of the crucifixion we can find other paschal lamb features, such as the hyssop, and the body of Christ not being left on the cross until the next day. It seems certain that the Old Testament reference of the title 'Lamb of God' is the paschal lamb.

The second clause of the title 'who takes away the sin of the world' refers to Is. 53, which is concerned with the Servant of the Lord. Jesus is presented by John as the Servant of the Lord who is being led without complaint like a lamb before the shearers, and as a man of sorrows, who bore the sins of many and made intercession for the transgressors. In Is. 53:7, 12 are combined the two ideas of lamb and of bearing sin. There is a difference between taking away sin and bearing sin, but John is supposed to have selected the Greek words which are suited to what Jesus actually did. The reference to the suffering Servant is by way of allusion, but Is. 53 also explains the genitive 'of God' in the expression 'Lamb of God,' since the latter seems to correspond to the title *'ebed yahweh*: servant of Yahweh. The explanation of the genitive given by Bultmann<sup>2</sup> and Barrett in the sense that the lamb is supplied by God is very unlikely.

The allusions to the paschal lamb and the Servant of the Lord are combined in such a way that neither figure alone can explain adequately the johannine title. The paschal lamb is not presented in the Old Testament as taking away sin, while the Servant of the Lord is only considered as the bearer of sin. Only the general context of Is. 53 suggests that the Servant justifies the multitude by taking away sin. Moreover the paschal lamb in the Old Testament is called not *amnos* but *probaton*. It is possible that other sacrificial figures influenced the

<sup>1</sup> A. Jaubert, 'La date de la dernière Cène' in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* CXLVI (1954), pp. 140-73. cf. L. Johnston, 'The Date of the Last Supper' in *Scripture* 1957, pp. 108-15.

<sup>2</sup> *Das Evangelium des Johannes*, p. 67

johannine title, e.g. the scapegoat of the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev. 6:22) or the daily sacrifice offered in the temple of Jerusalem which was called *tamid*.

Barrett thinks that the combination of the ideas of Christ as passover lamb and as Servant of the Lord who expiated sin by his death, was realised through the paschal interpretation of the Last Supper and of the Eucharist.

Cullmann, Mollat,<sup>1</sup> Brown, George and de la Potterie admit the double or plural reference to the Old Testament figures mentioned above. Barrett stresses the primary connection with the paschal lamb. Taylor and Boismard point out the prevalent conception of the Servant of Yahweh. According to the latter Jesus takes away the sin of the world by communicating to men the Spirit he received at his Baptism, for the Spirit is a power preventing men from committing sin (cf. Jn. 8:31-47; 1 Jn. 3:4-9). According to Brown, Dodd's apocalyptic significance could also be included in the interpretation of the title.

In general, therefore, we may conclude that the title 'Lamb of God' in the Fourth Gospel is one of the major johannine themes, containing the notion of redemption through death. This profound meaning is to be fully understood in the light of the actual death and resurrection of Christ.

## 2 *Its significance on the lips of John the Baptist*

According to the Fourth Gospel, this title of 'Lamb of God' is given to Jesus by John the Baptist during his ministry. But it is difficult to admit that the Baptist understood the profound meaning which the expression had after the death and resurrection of Christ. In general the whole christology of the Precursor in the Fourth Gospel raises a problem for the exegetes. The christological doctrine of the Baptist in John's Gospel explicitly includes the pre-existence of Christ (1:15, 27), his divinity (1:34) and his redemptive mission (this title, as explained above). But if we compare this doctrine with the Baptist's preaching in the synoptic Gospels we notice a great difference. The content of his message here is mostly eschatological, and passages like Mt. 11:1-6, describing the deputation he sent to Christ, imply that the Precursor did not understand the essential nature of Christ's ministry as Messiah.

Because of this divergence between the synoptics and John with regard to the Baptist's christology, a few authors deny that the latter in actual fact ever gave the title 'Lamb of God' to our Lord. The evangelist invented the incident, some few suggest, in order to stress

<sup>1</sup> *L'évangile de St Jean in Bible de Jérusalem*

the superiority of Jesus over the Baptist, and thereby assist the polemic against the Baptist's disciples. But these opinions are extremist and they are not accepted by the majority of exegetes. On the contrary the scholars maintain that the statement was actually made by the Baptist, but in a sense which was different from that which the evangelist intended when he wrote of the incident. The latter reinterpreted and rearranged the Baptist's statement according to a deeper theological sense, in the light of the whole ministry of Jesus and under the special influence of the Holy Spirit.

Thus we come to the question: What was the meaning of the title 'Lamb of God' in the mind of the Precursor? There are two main answers to this problem. The first is sponsored by Jeremias, Cullmann, Boismard and de la Potterie. These authors suggest that the Baptist designates Jesus not as a lamb but as a servant, using the Aramaic word *talya*, which can signify 'servant' as well as 'lamb.' When the Aramaic expression was translated into Greek by John or some earlier writer, the term was mistranslated, or rather reinterpreted and made to signify 'lamb.' The 'servant' in the mind of the Baptist is not a redeemer who offers his death in expiation of sin, but a prophet and a teacher, who purifies men from sin through the knowledge of the law and through wisdom. The background for this is the first Servant song (Is. 42:1-4), some sapiential texts in Sir. 24:22; Ps. 119:11; Henoch 5:8, and the Qumran writings, e.g. 1QS 4:20-3. These texts emphasise the idea that sins are purified by knowledge and wisdom. Moreover there is the general impact of Deutero-Isaiah on the description of John the Baptist. The Baptist identifies himself with the voice crying in the desert (cf. Is. 40:3). Jesus is called 'the chosen one of God' according to the variant in Jn. 1:34, and this is an allusion to Is. 42:1. Moreover the context of the Gospel supports this hypothesis, since Jesus presented himself at Nazareth as the preacher of the good tidings to the poor (Lk. 4:18). John the Baptist therefore announced Jesus as a teacher according to the prophecies of Isaiah. The expression 'Lamb of God' is due to the mistranslation of 'Servant of God.'

The second explanation of the sense of this title on the lips of the Baptist is based on the assumption that he spoke of the Messiah as the lamb of God in the light of the Jewish apocalyptic writings. The Baptist called Jesus the lamb of God in the sense of the conquering lamb to be raised up by God to destroy evil in the world. Thus this explanation is identical with the first interpretation Dodd gives of the meaning in the intention of the evangelist. He expresses this opinion only with probability on behalf of the Baptist. The advocates of this eschatological interpretation are Barrett and Brown. Concerning the

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use of the word *ṭalya*<sup>1</sup> these authors claim that there is no evidence to suggest that the present passage was translated directly from an Aramaic document, and in any case the natural Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew *'ebed* (i.e. servant) is not *ṭalya* but *'abda*. Moreover the fourth evangelist's retention of the expression 'lamb' on the lips of the Baptist must count for something. In actual fact the picture of the apocalyptic lamb is entirely consistent with the original form of the Baptist's message. Brown adds the arguments Dodd presented. The idea of a conquering lamb is found in the Jewish apocalyptic writings and the Apocalypse. The *Testament of Joseph* (19:8) speaks of a lamb (*amnos*) who overcomes the evil beasts and crushes them underfoot. Although there are Christian interpolations in this section of the book, Charles<sup>1</sup> does not think that the major picture of the lamb is an interpolation. In *Henoch* 90:38 where we find the great animal allegory of history, there comes at the end a horned bull which turns into a lamb, and the Lord of the sheep rejoices over the lamb which is the leader of all the animals.

Fr Brown does not rule out the possibility that the Baptist meant the statement in the Suffering Servant sense, for this idea could lie within his range of thought. The Baptist knew Isaiah, and the synoptic description of the Baptism of Jesus at the Jordan is made in a Suffering Servant context. However, Brown thinks that the eschatological interpretation fits the text better in its historical meaning.

We have seen, therefore, that recent discussion of the title 'Lamb of God' makes a distinction between the significance it had for the author of the Fourth Gospel writing after the Resurrection and the significance it had for the Baptist and his hearers on the day he gave it to our Lord. Some consider the former significance to be eschatological, but the majority, redemptive. Some consider its significance in the Baptist's mind to have been prophetic, others eschatological. I myself sympathise with the redemptive sense in the first case and with the eschatological one in the second.

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Mass.

<sup>1</sup> *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* II, 353

## THE HIDDEN MESSIAH AND HIS ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM—II<sup>1</sup>

The Entry into Jerusalem is a point on the line which goes back to the crucial decision to 'go up' to the city and forward to the consummation on the Cross. It has about it, as a messianic sign, an ambivalence, a purposeful ambiguity to explain which would be equivalent to explaining the chief riddle of the Gospels for the uncommitted reader—the mystery of the identity of the protagonist. We are accustomed to read that story forward; yet it is not a paradox but a sober historical truth to say that it was written backwards. I mean that the earliest references to that story speak of a period 'beginning from the baptism of John to the day when he was taken up from us' (Ac. 1:22), and the earliest professions of faith, to supplement which the story was written in the first place, are concerned with the fact that 'Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures . . .' (1 Cor. 15:3-4). It began, in other words, from their experience of the risen Lord as a *present* reality, and this forced them and their readers to explain the meaning of the death which preceded the resurrection. This, we feel, was an almost insuperable difficulty in the way of the first Christian catechists and missionaries, and it is interesting to see at what point of their apologia their non-Christian audiences stop listening. Paul, speaking to a cultured Greek audience (Ac. 17) gets a sympathetic hearing until he comes to the resurrection. For men for whom it was axiomatic that salvation can come only with liberation from the body and the material world (*to sōma sēma*—is not the body a tomb?) this bringing to life of a dead corpse was a too patent absurdity, and so the whole case collapsed, and Paul went on to Corinth a disappointed man.

For one addressing a Jewish audience the case was no easier. The idea of the rising of the dead was at least familiar even if not all accepted it (most did), but, for practically all, the idea of a dying and dead Messiah was a contradiction in terms. 'We know that the Anointed One remains for ever (Jn. 12:34)—so our Lord's Jewish interlocutors in Jerusalem, and the same ghost haunted the wrangle between Church and Synagogue for long years afterwards, as we know from Justin's polemic with Trypho and from other early Christian apologists. The Christian preacher and writer had to represent that death as being the result not of human machinations but

<sup>1</sup> cf. *Scripture* 1961, pp. 51-6

of a positive act of will on the part of Jesus himself; he goes to his death with his eyes open, because he wills it; and so the writer must read back through the passion to the moment when that act of will was elicited—for it will be from that moment that the drama of the passion and death really begins.<sup>1</sup>

We do not think it is very difficult to pinpoint that moment from the record of the ministry which we have in the four Gospels. There is an inconclusive ministry in Galilee which the third evangelist has summarised in the account of the rejection at Nazareth.<sup>2</sup> During all this first period there is, especially in the Second Gospel, a quite haunting return to the theme of the identity of the central figure: 'What is this? a new teaching'; 'We never saw anything like this'; 'Who is this that even wind and sea obey him'; 'Where did this man get all this from?'—the question is repeatedly asked, but as yet there is no answer, and Jesus can say, almost in exasperation, 'Do you not yet understand?'

Then comes the turning-point. In Caesarea Philippi he is acknowledged as the Anointed King, the *Christos*. This opens the road to the final witness and brings about the decision to carry the war into the heart of enemy territory, since 'it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem' (Lk. 13:33). Those who have recorded for us this decision were fully aware of its immense significance, so much so that it moulds the rest of the narrative and determines the course of events. Upon the confession of Peter there follows the prediction of the sufferings of the Son of Man, and the pilgrimage to Jerusalem begins. He is already en route when he turns back to rebuke Peter, telling him to get behind him, that is, not to impede his way as Satan attempted to do at the beginning. In order that the others might have no illusions he says clearly: 'If anyone will *come after me* (that is, on this journey) let him deny himself. . . .'<sup>3</sup> There is to be real danger of loss of life, and how real that danger was for that handful of men, every dramatic circumstance of the journey and its end will show.

We know from contemporary and near contemporary writers that there were three possible routes for pilgrims from the north: the easiest, due south, went through Samaria and got you to the city in three days. Josephus tells us that 'for rapid travel it was essential to take this route'—but we note that, when he himself had to send emissaries from Galilee southwards, he made sure that they went under

<sup>1</sup> The destiny of Christ was and is present in the timeless moment of God, but the decision is none the less real.

<sup>2</sup> Lk. 4:16-30

<sup>3</sup> In the Lukan parallel we read: 'take up his cross *daily*' which does no more than place the saying of the Lord directly at the service of the Christians for whom he was writing and those of later times.

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an armed escort five hundred strong. The Samaritans often planted ambushes as in the case described above, and we recollect the incident in which James and John wished to call down fire, after the refusal of Samaritan villages to receive their master when he went up to the city. That he took this route at least for the first part of the journey seems certain from Luke, but progress could not have been due south all the way, since we find him also in Transjordan Perea and at Bethany across the Jordan; the last stage from here to Jericho and on to the city is common ground for the four.

Despite some uncertainty about topography there seems reason to believe that at an earlier stage of the tradition the memory of this journey was more sharply and precisely preserved. It is no ordinary journey, as we can tell from the conversation which was exchanged on the way: he speaks always of the Kingdom that is coming, and the disciples are intensely occupied with their relative places in that Kingdom. This leads to disputes which took place 'while they were going on their way' (Mk. 9:33). The second prediction of the Passion is made, according to reliable evidence, 'while they were gathering in Galilee'—that is, presumably, for the Passover pilgrim convoy.<sup>1</sup> After a brief pause in Perea, the last stage of the journey on 'the road going up to Jerusalem' through Jericho and Bethany was taken.

These are some of the traces of this journey in the earliest accounts which we possess, and it is good to re-read them if only because it is often presumed, in contrast to the more explicit *schema* of Luke, that they are entirely absent.<sup>2</sup> The Third Gospel does nevertheless make much of this decision of our Lord by which he 'sets his face' with great resolution to go up to the city. Luke gives us the best picture of the mounting tension among those who followed, and who interpreted his intentions well or badly according to their own expectations. It is he who tells us it was while so many thousands came together that they trod upon one another, that Jesus gave his solemn warning about the leaven of the Pharisees, that is, the political Zionism of the day, preoccupied with unredeemed Israel and the Solomonic kingdom no sooner won than lost. The warning, it is clear, went unheeded, as did so many others; indeed, many of the sayings of this period contain a warning, usually veiled, against the

<sup>1</sup> Mt. 17:22. The reading 'gathering' has the authority of the Vatican and Sinaitic codices among others. It is followed in RSV but not in Knox and Douai.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in the recent book of A. Hastings, *Prophet and Witness in Jerusalem*, p. 103, where the presumption is that Matthew and Mark attribute little importance to the journey. We know of more than one journey to Jerusalem, but these two, as does Luke, press everything into the one great Passover pilgrimage of the redemption; a progress, that is, to the supreme moment which, translated into topography, meant a progress to the city.

tragic consequences of misunderstanding what was to happen when they reached the city. Luke was fully aware how widespread this misunderstanding was, as we can see from the note with which he prefaces the parable of the nobleman (Archelaus?) who went into a far country (Rome?) to obtain the kingdom. Jesus related this little story at this juncture, he tells us, 'since he was near to Jerusalem, and since they *supposed* that the Kingdom of God was to appear immediately' (Lk. 19:11).

It is further evident that this failure to realise our Lord's intentions was not confined to the crowd at large. As the two disciples going down to Emmaus some months later admit, they *had hoped* that he would have been the one to carry out the 'redemption,' that is, the political vindication, of Israel; and there is the appallingly naïve question put after the resurrection to the risen Christ, whether he was there and then to bring about the political restoration of Israel (Ac. 1:6). This deep gap between the two interpretations of the functions of the ideal Anointed King gives us the means of understanding some at least of the mysteries of the last week in the life of Christ, and in particular its inauguration with the triumphal entry into the city.

At his approach to Jericho Jesus is hailed for the first time, in St Mark at least, as the Son of David, a title which he does not repudiate. By now great crowds had gathered about him, and we might remember that the messianic coup of Simon, the slave-king, who had taken and burned Jericho on his way to Jerusalem, must still have been fresh in the memories of many, so that this part of the desert was an accepted gathering place for such attempts. John in fact gives us to understand that Jesus had a great following in this part where John had first baptised<sup>1</sup>; and, although he does not mention the healing of the blind man he gives great weight and emphasis to the raising of Lazarus. We are here in close proximity to the hill of Olives and the valley of Kidron which was the *campo santo* where every pious Jew of that day (and long after) desired to lay his bones, in order to be at hand for the last trumpet call and the judgment.<sup>2</sup> From this, some have deduced, and perhaps correctly, that the raising of Lazarus was not only a great work of spiritual mercy but also and especially a living sign (*sêmeion* or 'sign' is the word for miracle in John's vocabulary) of the resurrection of the dead in the age the Messiah must come to inaugurate. In fact, John states quite clearly that it was 'on account of him (Lazarus) that the Jews were going

<sup>1</sup> Jn. 10:41

<sup>2</sup> The valley of Kidron is the same as Jehoshaphat, where God will judge, and which inspired the great scene of the vivified bones in Ez. 37.

away and believing in Jesus' (12:10). Here was a man who had actually risen from the dead; the last age, the end of the times is already upon us! And so they pressed on to the Holy City.

All our sources agree that the messianic entry began at the hill of Olives, and from St Luke we gather that the rejoicing takes on a special intensity there (19:37). This is the holy hill of revelation towards which the first temple was orientated, the hill on which since time immemorial God had been worshipped.<sup>1</sup> Upon it Ezekiel had seen the new Jerusalem arise where, according to traditional teaching, the Messiah would appear. It was here that the Egyptian, mentioned above, assembled his band of 4,000, or 30,000 according to Josephus, and prepared to march on the city, and we read later that it was while they were standing there that the disciples asked the Risen Christ whether he was there and then to establish the Kingdom. The way to Jerusalem, the home of the heart, the shining city, was a well-trodden path not only in the hopes and prayers of the people, but also in those continuous, pathetic attempts to force the hand of God and to bring about the desired consummation by an appeal to violence. In the light of this it is not difficult for us to understand the fateful ambivalence of the event of which we have been speaking; what it probably meant for the crowds who clapped and acclaimed it; and what it meant in the mind of our Lord and in the counsel of God which was then coming to completion by unexpected ways.

It is this ambivalence and the real danger of the situation which explains the air of secrecy about the bringing of the animal upon which he was to ride and later the preparations for the Passover meal. We are struck, when we read the account of the former, by the great length comparatively speaking at which the incident of the untying of the colt is told; this and other indications might lead us to suspect that, in addition to the reference to the prophecy of Zachary which is quoted at length by Matthew and John, there is some other less apparent prophetic significance in this action. This suspicion had already occurred to some early Christian writers who see in the untying and bringing of the ass a fulfilling of the Oracle of Jacob on Jehudah who is the ancestor of David. The mysterious 'One who is to come' whose name is Shiloh has tied his ass to the vine, his ass's colt to the choice vine. Before he comes his ass must be untied so that he can mount it; and now he is here. As is evident, we are not attempting to paraphrase the text in accordance with its original meaning; that would be altogether too cavalier! But this corresponds with the general way in which this messianic text was utilised by writers both Christian and Jew of a later age. And the ass *was*, in

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. 15:32

fact, the mount used by the royal ancestor of Christ. We know from the Targums that Jewish liturgical usage applied the text of Gen. 49: 8-12 to the King Messiah, and there is a constant stream of rabbinical tradition to the same effect. Justin, who can be taken to be familiar with Jewish polemical tactics, goes so far as to say that the ass which bore our Lord in his messianic ride of triumph 'stood bound to a vine,<sup>1</sup> and other Christian writers, though not all so clearly, have evidently seen the Entry as the fulfilment of the Genesis oracle.

If we bear this in mind other allusions in the Entry narrative acquire a deeper meaning. Thus the acclamation for the 'One who comes,' though made in the words of the Hallel psalm 118 and therefore possibly referring originally to the pilgrim coming to the feast, must have had a fuller and more urgent resonance in the extraordinary tension of that moment. In fact, the Second Gospel adds—in explanation?—'Blessed is the kingdom of our father David which is *imminent*,' and the Third, 'Blessed is the King (Messiah) who is coming.' The Fourth Gospel adds a kind of explanatory gloss in much the same way that the Targums do for the Genesis text, which equates the 'One who comes' with the 'King of Israel'—as is familiar to us from the Palm Sunday liturgy. We should mention too that the prophecy of Zachary itself seems to be connected indirectly with the oracle of Juda.<sup>3</sup>

How would this have been understood at the time? The Romans, or some of them at least (and there must have been Romans present), knew of an obscure oracle that a world leader was to come from Juda—some of them later on found it a very convenient justification and legitimation of the claims of Vespasian when he was proclaimed on Palestinian soil, for did he not, at least for the time being, come from Judea (Juda)? It is unlikely, however, that any Roman bystanders at that moment would have had any misgivings about a king who elected to enter in triumph on an ass. This certainly wasn't the kind of royal *parousia* they were accustomed to see. For the discerning and thoughtful Jew, on the other hand, the choice of the ass opened up the basic possibility of understanding the intentions of its rider. He was the peaceful prince of Isaiah and Zachary; by choosing an ass rather than the more usual horse he was implicitly repudiating the current solution to Israel's dire plight. In the later scriptures the horse is practically a symbol of war and violence; it is, in fact, the war engine *par excellence*, and, apart from two cases in the Book of Esther,

<sup>1</sup> *First Apologia* 32; cf. Clem. Alex: *Paedagogus* 1, 5, 15

<sup>2</sup> cf. 'Behold, your king *comes* to you' with 'Until Shiloh *comes*.' In Mic. 5 we have a passage where the One to Come is given the title *Shalom* or Peace, and the same chapter contains unmistakable reference to the One to Come of Gen. 49 (the Lion of v. 7). The king of Zach. 9 is evidently the peaceful king riding the Davidic mount.

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we do not read of anyone not of military rank who rides on a horse. An interesting confirmation can be found in the very prophecy of Zachary where, after the promise of the humble, victorious king, the writer continues: 'I will cut off the chariots from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem' (9:10). Going back to the time of David himself, it is a sign of the pride of the rebellious Absalom that he uses chariots and horsemen when he sets up to be king. The conclusion then could have been drawn at once that the kingdom to come was not to be won by war or the use of violence.

There is, however, no evidence that the bystanders drew that conclusion. The mount was for them simply the mount of the One to come of the stock of Jehudah, the *David redivivus*, the man of war. After all, they would have thought, David himself mounted the ass and rode upon it into Jerusalem just as this Jesus is doing, and did not his son Solomon mount the royal mule when he went in procession to Gihon for his royal anointing? Was not this the first step in the fulfilling of God's promise to David's seed? Many, perhaps most, connected the fulfilment of this promise with the feast of the Passover they were then beginning to celebrate, and we can catch the undertone of excitement at the prospect of the imminent 'inbreaking' of the kingdom through the mighty works of Jesus which, as it were, threw down the supreme challenge to God. But there were also those who had everything to lose by such an eventuality or the attempt to realise it and, in the event, the kingdom of misguided hope did not 'break in,' and in the eyes of the world Jesus died at the hands of His enemies as a messianic pretender, shortly before the Passover began.

We have tried to offer a reading of this supreme moment in the human drama of our Lord and of the sequence of events which led up to it in the light, we might say the lurid glow, of the political agonies and frustrations of that age. It shows us, perhaps from a new angle, how, through the Incarnation, he placed himself utterly at the mercy of our human history by becoming a part of it. History translated into human life means destiny, namely a movement and an end—in the sense the Greeks meant when they used the word *telos*.<sup>1</sup> He was Jeshuah bar-Joseph, born into a Jewish tribe at a certain ascertainable point in time and place and, as we have seen, at a crucial moment in human history. A less desirable corollary of this is that by so doing he placed himself at the mercy of historians. The reading and study of the facts of his life and especially the last few days of his

<sup>1</sup> A better translation might be 'goal' (cf. Rom. 10:4 where Christ is the 'goal' of the Torah; also Rom. 6:21, eternal life as the goal of Christian existence etc.)

life invites or rather forces a decision, from us now as from those who witnessed and lived those days. It is here that the ways divide. In a reported conversation with Ferré, Professor Whitehead declared of Christ: 'His life was not an exhibition of overruling power. Its glory is for those who discern it and not for the world. It has the decisiveness of a supreme ideal, and that is why the history of the world divides at this point.'<sup>1</sup> Can history give the final verdict? For some, like Reimarus and Eisler, the messianic entry represents the ephemeral triumph of a popular agitator, a fanatical field preacher in search of a revolution; his *Putsch* fails and he is taken and executed by the Romans as they had taken and executed so many others whose ambitions were not commensurate with their inner possibilities. His cry of real despair on the cross, 'My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?' is sealed by a terrible and tragic finality. For others, like Schweitzer, he goes up to the city from his native Galilee to force the hand of God, to bring in the kingdom by the sacrifice of his life, but the Kingdom does not come in, and his sacrifice, for all the fine gesture, is wasted. For the Christian reader Christ is indeed, as he so emphatically stated before Pilate, a king, *the* King, but as he rode into the city of the Great King he knew that he had already rejected the kingdom of this world which Satan had offered at the beginning, and the title over the Cross which caught the eye of the dying thief was to be fully vindicated within three days, and in the years that followed.

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## BIBLE LANDS BY JEEP—I

Seven thousand miles by Land-Rover in the heat of the Middle East may not be everyone's idea of a summer holiday. But if such a journey involves inconvenience, hardship and strain (and it does not require much effort of the memory to recall that it did), it also makes possible the sort of knowledge of Bible lands which no amount of books and photographs can ever adequately provide. Père Lagrange's dictum, that no-one really understands the Bible until he has visited the lands of the Bible, was not a mere recruiting slogan for the *École Biblique*. There is a depth and solidity about such first-hand acquaintance with the stage on which the history of salvation was enacted

<sup>1</sup> 'Whitehead and Ferré discuss God' in *Hibbert Journal* LVI, p. 267

which add a third dimension to the study of Scripture. It is in the hope that others planning to make this acquaintance for themselves may find them useful that the following observations (of a purely practical nature) have been noted down. Certainly the journey in question was helped to no small extent by similar practical hints offered in the pages of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*.<sup>1</sup>

An expedition such as the one envisaged here, from the Nile to the Tiber, will take about eleven weeks. More time can obviously be spent if the investigation of the numerous biblical sites is to be done more thoroughly, but nothing more than a 'Cook's Tour' could be achieved in less. Obviously too, if the journey to Egypt is to be done overland, more time will be required. As for costs, a party of four, using their own transport, could expect to contribute up to £300 each. Here too it goes without saying that the standards of luxury demanded could increase the expenses indefinitely, but nothing within reasonable comfort could be realised for much less. If these two preliminary hurdles (and they are considerable ones) can be cleared, the following additional details will need attention.

*Passports and Visas.* An ordinary British passport is valid for all foreign countries, including Israel. However, since the Arab countries do not recognise the existence of Israel, and will even refuse to acknowledge any document which makes reference to it, a second passport is issued to British travellers, valid for Israel only. (Americans, from whom Israel does not require a visa, get around the difficulty by inserting into their passport a card for official endorsement in Israel, the card being later removed.) This second passport is of course supposed to remain unknown to Arab officials, and one is warned to keep it well hidden; in actual fact they know of its existence perfectly well since every pilgrim carries one. The principal passport will need to be endorsed with visas for the United Arab Republic, Jordan and Lebanon (Cyprus, Turkey, Greece and Italy do not demand a visa), and there is no longer any difficulty about obtaining these, provided sufficient time (two to three weeks) is allowed. It is as well to know that the UAR visa is valid for both Egypt and Syria, and even allows the period specified (two weeks, a month) to be spent in each country successively. But it should be pointed out (as it was not to the writer) that this only applies to those travelling direct from one country to the other. If any other country is visited in between (namely Jordan overland, or Lebanon by sea), a new visa is required and charged for at the frontier.

*Insurance.* Car insurances for countries outside Europe do not

<sup>1</sup> R. North, S.J., 'The Present Accessibility of Pauline Sites' in *CBQ* xviii, no. 1 (Jan. 1956), pp. 30-46; 'Report from Palestine' in *CBQ* xxii, no. 1 (Jan. 1960), pp. 80-4

come within the usual terms of reference of Insurance Companies, but they are willing to quote special terms (£80 in the case in question). Insurance for travel in Egypt seemed in 1960 to provide some difficulties, since diplomatic relations had only recently been restored. In future years these difficulties may no longer exist; if they do, private arrangements can be made on the spot at Cairo or Port Said. Sickness and possible hospital fees can and should be insured against, the premium for a period of three months being reasonably small (£6-£7). The insurance of personal effects may be left to each person's taste; if the usual precautions are taken there is no more danger of theft in the Middle East than anywhere else. On the journey in question, no article was lost until the doors of the vehicle were inadvertently left unlocked in the centre of Christianity, Rome.

*Health.* Israel requires visitors to the country to have been vaccinated against smallpox within the last three years. Any doctor will provide this service, but his certificate must be stamped by the local Public Health Department before it is valid. Inoculation against cholera and typhoid fever is not demanded, but the traveller to the Middle East will be happier about the water he drinks there if he has taken this precaution too. Against dysentery, unfortunately, there is no immunisation, and the Westerner must be resigned to suffer this discomfort as part of the price the East demands of him. A degree of safety can be achieved by care in the amount of cold drink and skin fruit taken, and in the consumption of food handled by anyone stricken with the disease. But the heat and the unusual food will almost certainly affect most stomachs. A generous supply of some astringent is advisable (Enterovioform is recommended, available in most chemists in the Middle East under the name of Enterosept). Individual nostrums must be left to each person's taste, but a party (especially if travelling by car) should carry a communal medicine chest for emergencies. The growing of beards, which holds a curious appeal for the romantically minded, is not conducive to hygiene.

*Photography.* Photographers would be well advised to bring a generous supply of film, even an over-generous supply, since there is nothing like the Middle East to make one trigger-happy. Borrowing film can lead to hard feelings if it leaves the lender short, and Kodak, Ilford and the rest are not only difficult to obtain in Cairo, Jerusalem and Istanbul but also monstrously expensive. Whether exposed or not the film should come to no harm, even in a Middle East summer, if it is stored well away from direct heat. It is not wise to try to airmail it home: customs formalities are heartbreaking and the postage prohibitive. The enthusiast should perhaps also be warned that he will encounter obstacles he has not had to contend with before.

The most innocent sites have acquired military importance, and official permission may be required to use a camera there. In this regard there is no need for over-scrupulosity, but he would do well to pay considerable respect to the fear that many Arabs have of the camera. Whether this is connected with a superstitious dread of the 'evil eye,' or with the more understandable notion that a photograph takes something inalienable from them (cf. the biblical jealousy over one's 'name'), the fact is that it is not unknown for unimaginative photographers to have had their cameras smashed (and sometimes their faces too) by irate Arabs, especially in defence of the privacy of their womenfolk.

*Clothes.* Nights can be cool, especially on high ground such as Sinai or Hermon. So also can a sunless morning in Turkey or Greece, and a sweater or two will not be out of place in the luggage. But the pilgrim's main concern will be with the heat. The 'dry heat' consolingly promised him by the travel brochures, which will not cause the 'discomfort' experienced in European climates, is a sheer imposture. Even the slightest exertion in a Middle East summer will in fact make him feel (and look) like a wet rag. The fact that he will also be covered daily with the fine dust that is universal in the East will make it essential for him to carry several changes of clothing if he is not to be impossible to live with. Light clothing is advisable, of the type that can easily be washed by an amateur, for the intense heat that makes life a burden will also dry a washed shirt within a few hours. A lightweight cassock of some neutral colour (grey or khaki) is not only the most dignified garment for a priest to wear east of Turkey, but also the most comfortable: it covers a multitude of other inadequacies. In fact if luggage space permits, it would be wise to carry two, to allow for laundering.

*Camping.* Camping may not be to everyone's taste. Nor is it generally necessary: there is nowhere in Bible lands where a day's journey will not provide some sort of guest house. Indeed, in countries where accommodation is cheap and sometimes (in religious houses) free, the small amount of money saved by camping may not pay for the trouble and discomfort it involves. It should also be appreciated that the East is not geared to this sport as our countryside is, and east of Greece and even more of Turkey the camper will need to be far more self-sufficient than he would bother to be in Europe. Food of some sort will usually be obtainable easily enough, but it would be wise to carry a supply of tinned goods for emergencies, especially of milk. Water should be carried in any case: in lands that sometimes go for years without rainfall it is in short supply, and a canvas 'chugge' hung on the outside of the vehicle can be worth

its weight in gold. A portable Mass-kit (with a supply of wine and altar breads) would seem to be essential. Even apart from camping there will be occasions when Mass cannot be celebrated without it.

*Transport.* For a party of four or five, some machine like the long-based Land-Rover is ideal. The cab allows copious room for two (even for three on shorter journeys), and the large compartment behind will comfortably accommodate the other passengers and the luggage. It has its disadvantages of course: the solid-sides model will leave the passengers with a boxed-in feeling, and the removable-canvas model provides little protection against theft and no choice at all between dust and air; one has neither or both. Moreover the ample storage room may tempt members of the party to include in their luggage the sort of equipment which might be needed but never is (there is really little call in the Middle East for the typewriter, tape-recorder, guitar, collapsible bath and edition of Shakespeare that were taken on the journey in question). But these disadvantages are far outweighed by the sturdiness of a machine which will stand up to the sort of road conditions that this journey offers. It is true that one hears of London taxis being used for expeditions of this kind. But there is much to be said for a vehicle that will travel 7,000 miles of bad roads without any tyre complaints, that will be in daily contact for three months with extremes of heat and dust without developing any starting troubles or oil-filter problems, that has the high-ratio gears and the four-wheel drive that can negotiate almost anything, and that will even (*experto crede*) stand a complete overturning with damage only to the bodywork. Unfortunately its petrol consumption is high—fifteen miles per gallon. The tank holds only ten gallons, and it is advisable to carry two jerry-cans with a reserve of another nine.

(To be continued)

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## BOOK REVIEW

F. X. Durrwell, C.S.S.R., *The Resurrection*. A Biblical Study, translated by Rosemary Sheed and with an introduction by Charles Davis, S.T.L. Sheed and Ward, London and New York 1960. pp. xxvi + 371, 30s.

This first English edition of what has become a standard work in France (appearing in 1950, it reached its fifth edition in 1960 after making a noteworthy contribution to Continental theology) has already begun to carve out a niche for itself this side of the Channel. And the reason is not far to seek: it offers to make good the protein deficiency of our theology manuals where the resurrection was reduced to the shrivelled proportion of mere apologetic. It sets out to put the resurrection of Christ back into its correct place in the picture of the redemption.

From the time of *Cur Deus Homo*, Western theologians (with the exception of St Thomas whose intuition here was more Greek than Latin) have been so taken up with the salvific richness of Christ's death for mankind that the resurrection was relegated to being little more than a proof for his divinity; at most, as Fr Durrwell remarks, it was seen 'as the end of a side stream flowing out of the mainstream of the Redemption' (p. 56). L. Alonso-Schökel, in an extensive article in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* of April 1959 entitled 'Argument d'Écriture et théologie biblique dans l'enseignement théologique,' has traced this tendency of manual theology against a wider background and shown how an undue emphasis on apologetics has resulted in the Bible being used as a quarry from which handy stones might be picked up for throwing at protagonists. The rich ore the same quarry hid was unexploited. But Fr Durrwell attempts—and succeeds very admirably—in opening up for us the immense store of doctrine which too many speculative theologians had left almost completely unplundered until the resurgence of biblical studies gave them the lead.

His method is that of a biblical theologian, not in the sense that he sets out to analyse (after the historical method) what the sacred writer is thinking, but rather 'to grasp the Christian reality underlying the inspired text . . . (to) effect a synthesis which the writers of the Bible did not express and may not even fully have realised' (pp. xxiv–xxv). His basic thesis is that Christ's death and resurrection are inseparables, each needing the other to give it its dimension: Christ died for our salvation and rose again for our justification—it's as close as that.

The content of the book is so well organised (scripture is not made

to limp between the crutches of manual systematisations) that the reader's attention is always held. An introductory chapter describes the redemptive nature of the resurrection in the light of the sacred writers' teaching. Dealing with the Old Testament, the author is chiefly concerned with the figure of the suffering just man in the Psalms and in Isaiah. He shows how God outlined the salvation to be fulfilled in Israel in the fulness of time: 'He showed himself as the God who saves from death; man's salvation is seen as a life coming from God. Various psalms speak of sufferings similar to Christ's and a providential salvation like his resurrection. . . . All these psalms express a twofold movement of descent and re-ascent, a kind of rough sketch of a death and a resurrection. The New Testament gives us the exegesis of most of these psalms. . . . With Christ as exemplar it became legitimate to apply to him alone texts which in their context applied to the prophets or the singers of Israel or to phases of the race's history' (pp. 1-2). This alone will be news for those whose Old Testament prophecies for Christ's resurrection centred round such texts, snatched from their explanatory context, as that of Job 19:25 (not even mentioned by Durrwell) and understood as if from a fortune-teller's vision of the future. Passing to the New Testament, Fr Durrwell concentrates chiefly on John and Paul and shows how from these two parallel streams the concept of the resurrection loomed large in the minds of the primitive Christian theologians. Comparing these sources, the author notes that 'Whereas with St John the Incarnation is always at least in the background of his thought, it almost seems as though to St Paul the risen Christ is a complete beginning, the first breaking through of the divine into the world of sin' (p. 25).

Careful to avoid treating the resurrection as an isolated theme, in Chapter II Fr Durrwell establishes the relationship of the resurrection with two other truths of the redemption: the Incarnation and the death of Christ, and in Chapter III the special role of the resurrection in our salvation is linked with the 'bursting into the world of the Holy Spirit.' Chapters IV to VII examine the effects of the resurrection in Christ himself with its glorious exaltation of his humanity, in the Church which was born out of his resurrection and which gives it a paschal existence. Here are to be found some remarkable pages, particularly in Chapter VII which treats of the progress and consummation of that paschal mystery in the Church. In the subsection, 'The Church lagging behind the resurrection of her Head,' the author has this to say: 'Thus the Church bears the marks of two opposite states. She leads a mysterious, heavenly existence, and she is also a visible, empirical reality. Her visible life on earth is related to her delay in achieving the full resurrection of her head. Whereas in his

# BOOK REVIEW

individual body Christ is beyond the reach of sense, in his mystical body he remains in space and time. The fact of being engaged in history is an imperfection for God's people ; it indicates an incomplete evolution of their resurrection in Christ' (p. 270). In an interesting aside (p. 271, note) Fr Durrwell writes : 'There are many brethren who do not know each other at all, and even among those who do, their union with Christ remains very superficial. When the Church is lifted above her earthly condition, she will discover the presence of children she has never known, and men who never recognised the one true Church will call her "Mother".' Chapter VIII describes how the paschal life spreads throughout the world—through the work of the Apostles and in the administering of the sacraments, especially baptism and the eucharist. A final chapter deals with the fulfilment of the Easter mystery in heaven.

Such a brief summary cannot hope to lay bare the extraordinary riches of this exceptional book—a glance at the Index will indicate the wealth of subjects treated, biblical, dogmatic and spiritual. It is a very convincing example of what Pius XII hoped to bring about through the biblical revival : a revitalisation of theology and consequently of everyday spiritual values. And Fr Davis, in his introduction shows that 'the present renewal in the Church is essentially a rediscovery of the Resurrection' (xix).

This introduction by Fr Davis deserves a special word. Aware, as he is, that 'a glance at several well-known and generally praiseworthy manuals will show only a *scholion* of sometimes less than a page is devoted to the Resurrection in the section on redemption' (p. xv), and aware also that many speculative theologians would know more of this deeper approach, he has traced out a method of working which will be found of the greatest importance in their study of this book (and indeed of the whole modern trend). One might suppose that whereas the scripturist will avidly devour the substantial fare offered by Fr Durrwell, the speculative theologian will be more immediately interested in what Fr Davis has to say ; for him there will be something Shavian in the relationship of the introduction to the drama which follows.

Miss Sheed's translation is very competent. In her favour, too, is the fact that she commits none of those blunders which have peppered the pages of recent biblical translations. One minor point. She seems to have Canon Drinkwater's horror of the spelling 'Yahweh' and gives us instead the distinctively unfashionable 'Iahweh.' The Douay text is quoted.

PATRICK FANNON, S.M.M.

## BOOKS RECEIVED

(The mention of books in this list neither implies nor precludes  
subsequent review)

*The Pamphlet Bible Series*, general editor Neil J. McEleney, C.S.P. Paulist Press, New York. *The Book of Deuteronomy, Part II*, George S. Glanzman, S.J. pp. 96, 75c. *The Book of Josue*, Joseph J. De Vault, S.J. pp. 96, 75c. *The Book of Judges*, Philip J. King. pp. 96, 75c.

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